

were in such lowly circumstances as the Gospel found them; for very few of those who are in what are called the upper classes of society have received the Gospel of the Son of God. It has seemed as though these spirits were purposely sent into lowly homes, into obscure families, and into places where, when the Gospel was sounded in their ears, there was not so much to sacrifice in order to receive it.

This is the work we are engaged in, my brethren and sisters, and we should be engaged in it with all our hearts. We should contend against the evil influences that are around us. We should keep our hearts open to the influences of the Spirit of God. We call upon the people with unwearying effort and with unceasing voice to live so near to God that they shall know for themselves. You remember the instance of the two young men in the camp of Israel upon whom the spirit of prophecy fell. Their brethren of the seventy had gone out of the camp unto the tabernacle but they remained, and the spirit of prophecy fell upon them and they prophesied in the camp. Joshua, the servant of Moses was jealous because of their having received this spirit, and he told Moses about it. The reply of Moses was that of a man of God, who understood the things of the Kingdom of God. There was no narrowness, no jealousy in the heart of that noble man. He said unto Joshua,

Enviest thou for my sake? Would God that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that the Lord would put His Spirit upon them!

He was glad to hear that the spirit of prophecy had rested upon these two men. He would have been glad if it had rested upon every man in Israel. So it is today. Would God that all the Elders of Israel, and all the Latter-day Saints, were filled with every gift and grace that God ever bestows on human kind! Would to God that this entire people would live so as to commune constantly with Him! Would the First Presidency and the Twelve Apostles be jealous? Not in the least. Oh! how easy it would be to govern this people, to direct these apostles, these bishops, and these elders if they were filled with the Spirit of God and the power of the everlasting priesthood. Who could be jealous under such circumstances? It would be hailed as the most glorious day that had ever dawned upon the human family if every man and woman in this church were to live so near to God that they would have the visions of eternity before them and comprehend the things of God as they really are. Do I speak now of something that cannot be reached? No, it is within the reach of every human being that will keep the commandments of God. You can walk in the light, brethren; you can walk in the light, sisters. You can have the light and power of God constantly with you, to lead and guide you in all the things of the kingdom. And that is what we are laboring for; that is why we preach to you; that is why we visit you when we can, and talk to you as we do. Our purpose is to stir you up, as sons and daughters of God, to have the power of God, and to be in close communion with your Heavenly Father. He is not our Father alone. He is your Father, and He sends us as His messengers to you. He tells us what to say to you. He fills us with His Holy Spirit, till it seems, at times, as though it would

burn us up. No human tongue can express the great desire that fills our hearts toward you. We want you to be saved. We want you to be exalted. We want you to fill your missions and to build up the Kingdom of God, never to be thrown down. That is our desire. It is with us by night and by day. We yearn over this people as a mother does over her children, and we testify to you concerning these things because we ourselves have proved them. God himself has told us concerning these matters, and we do not speak that which we do not know. And the Lord is going to hold us as a people accountable for the light and knowledge He has given and the opportunities he has offered us. I say to you, therefore, we must be obedient to the voice of God; we must listen to His counsels; we must seek to know His mind and will. Can I describe the glory that awaits us if we are faithful? I cannot. No human tongue can describe it. The only way to know it is by having the spirit and power of God, and revelations and visions given to us. But I know that He intends to exalt you, to give you glory, to crown you, and to have you sit upon thrones. This is no imaginary thing. You will not wield a barren sceptre. You will not wear a crown that will not be emblematical of power. God intends to bestow power upon you. But He will have you faithful, He will have you humble and obedient, and He will have you united. We are now passing through things to test us.

Allusion was made yesterday by Elder Moses Thatcher to the spirit of acrimony that he said existed among the people; such a spirit is wrong. We must cultivate a spirit that will make us united, though we may differ in our views concerning the methods of government. The Latter-day Saints have got to be tried in this. The Lord has permitted it for a wise purpose, and He wants us to be a wise people and not forget the principles of the Gospel. For I tell you, my brethren and sisters, that we have not for years been saying to you in vain that the time is coming when the people of God will exercise great influence in this land. If we will be wise, temperate in the exercise of power, and conform to the principles that He has taught us, we shall be a shining light in the midst of this nation. The eyes of the nation will be directed toward us. They will see that God is with us—or some power that they have not got. They will see that there is a superiority about our organization that they do not have.

Already the course that the Lord has pointed out for His servants to take has been vindicated and is being vindicated more and more, and the day is not far distant when these things will be recognized by the nations, our own nation especially. Therefore we should prove ourselves worthy, and show that we are indeed a people such as they have heard we are. We are noted for a few good qualities, and we should maintain these qualities. One of them is our honesty. We should be an honest people. We should be honest in our dealings one with another, and no man, if he act honestly in all things will ever fail to receive the Spirit of God to help him, while no dishonest man can ever hope to have the Spirit of God with him to any extent. We must not take advantage of one another. We must carry out the principles of the Gospel in our

personal dealings. Another characteristic that we are noted for is our frugality. We are said to be a frugal and an economical people. This is true in part, but we should cultivate this. We are said to be a united people. This is true to a certain extent. It is thought—and I wish it were so, in some respects—that if the First Presidency were to tell you to do a certain thing you would do it without question. That is not correct. There are no more independent people on this land than the Latter-day Saints. They have proved it by embracing the Gospel in the midst of the adverse circumstances which surrounded them, but if the First Presidency, the Twelve Apostles and other officers of the Church have influence it is because they teach the people correct principles, and the people recognize them and carry them out. It is only in this that their influence consists. But we should be more united than we are. These characteristics, for which we are noted, should increase among us.

Now in relation to virtue. While I think we compare very favorably with many communities, I fear that there is too great a laxity in some quarters in this direction. I know however, that God will cleanse that element from our midst. One of the inevitable consequences of the practice of unchastity is the departure of the Spirit of God from those who indulge in it. They become weak in the faith, and are severed from the Church of Christ. This has been the case from the beginning; it will continue to be the case, for this work has within itself the power of purification. The principles of the Gospel have the effect of self-purification. The Church is kept cleansed by the power that is within it. Those who do wrong and continue therein lose the Spirit of God and go into darkness. There is one thing that I am told is practiced to some extent among us, and I say to you that where it is practiced and not thoroughly repented of the curse of God will follow it. I refer to the practice of preventing the birth of children. I want to lift my voice in solemn warning against this, and I say to you that the woman who practices such devilish arts, or the man who consents to them, will be cursed of God. Such persons will be cursed in their bodies, cursed in their minds, cursed in their property, cursed in their offspring. God will wipe them out from the midst of this people and nation. *Remember it.* Mothers, teach this to your daughters, for I tell you it is true. I need not pronounce any curse, whatever my authority may be, but I say to you that women who take this course, and men who consent to it, will be cursed of God Almighty, and it will rest upon them until their generation shall be blotted out, and their name shall be lost from the midst of the Saints of God, unless, as I have said, there is deep, thorough and heartfelt repentance. God will also cleanse the adulterer from our midst. The man that is an adulterer and the woman that is an adulteress, God will curse. The Lord's vengeance will be kindled against such, and it will follow them unless they repent with full purpose of heart. I warn you, therefore, on this day of our Lord, in this solemn assembly, against these practices. A man cannot look upon a woman to lust after her without losing the Spirit of God, unless he repent with all his heart. God will have a pure